DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 139 316 HE 008 912

AUTHOR	Esp, Barbarann
TITLE	Student Profile: Freshmen 1976-77.
INSTITUTION	Hofstra Univ., Hempstead, N.Y. New Coll.
PUB DATE	May 77
NOTE	17p.
AVAILABLE FROM	New College Educational Research Office, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York 11550
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Career Planning; Demography; *Educational Objectives; Educational Research; Expository Writing; *Freshmen; *Higher Education; Institutional Research; *Self Concept; *Student Attitudes; *Student Characteristics; Student Evaluation; Student Interests; Student Motivation; Student Opinion; Student Research; Students; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	American Council on Education Questionnaire; New College Writing Test; Omnibus Personality Inventory

ABSTRACT

New College at Hofstra University is an alternative to the conventional liberal art program; students achieve the traditional liberal arts goals through a curriculum which is more flexible in structure and more varied in modes of educational experiences offered. A profile of the characteristics of students choosing to attend New College was developed by administering a series of three entrance tests to entering freshmen in September 1976. The three assessment instruments administered to 37 students were: the American Council on Education (ACE) questionnaire determining background information, educational and career objectives, values and attitudes, and trait self-ratings; the Omnibus Personality Inventory measuring intellectual disposition or style; and the New College Writing Test to test a student's ability to write clear and correct expository prose. Comparisons are made between 1976 students and students entering in previous years as well as comparisons with students entering other universities on a national scale. The resulting differences occurred in the area of career objectives, and social and political values. The New College student appears to be more educationally and academically self-confident than the average entering freshmen. (JMF)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED139316

STUDENT PROFILE: FRESHMEN 1976-77

Barbarann Esp
Research Associate

New College Educational Research Office

Hofstra University
Hempstead, New York
11550

HE008912

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

May 1977

New College is one of Hofstra University's five school offering both a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degree. The college began seventeen years ago as an alternative to the conventional undergraduate liberal arts program, with the aim of helping its students to achieve the traditional liberal arts goals through a curriculum which was more flexible in structure and more varied in the modes of educational experiences offered. In more recent years, the College has attempted to formulate a profile of the characteristics of students choosing to attend New College. The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of a series of entrance tests administered to the entering freshmen in September, 1976. Where appropriate comparisons will be made between 1976 students and students entering in previous years as well as comparisons with students entering other universities on a national scale.

PROCEDURES

Thirty-seven of the entering freshmen were administered three assessment instruments. It should be emphasized that the entrance test information is not part of the student's official record, and is used for research purposes only.

Instruments

The three assessment instruments administered were:

American Council on Education (ACE) questionnaire

This is a nationally normed questionnaire administered to freshmen at many universities throughout the United States. It is composed of demographic, attitude, and opinion questions.

Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI)

This inventory is a measure of intellectual disposition or style. It is not an ability or achievement examination. It was developed to"...assess selected attitudes, values, and interests, chiefly relevant in the area of normal ego-functioning and intellectual activity." (Heist and Yonge,1968).

New College Writing Test

This test was developed by the New College Writing Program Committee to test a students' ability to write clear and correct expository prose. The student is requested to write a 500 word essay on one of eleven topics.

ACE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Background Information

Forty percent of the respondents were males and 60 % were females. On a national scale, New College attracted a greater amount of females than males. Sixty-five percent of the entering New College freshmen in 1976 were between the ages of 18 and 20, with 35 % under 18. By comparison to other universities, New College has twice as many entering students below age eighteen.

Ninety-eight percent of the 1976 students indicated they were White/Caucasian, with the remaining 2 % being Black/Negro/ Afro-American. This has been approximately the same composition for the past four years.

The socioeconomic background of the New College freshmen is roughly the same as that of all other 1976 students. Specifically, 60 % of the respondents indicated estimated family income between $10,000 and $20,000, with 30 % of the New College students coming from families with incomes over $20,000.

Forty-three percent of the students identified their father's occupation as businessman, while 36 % reported their mother's occupation as full-time homemaker.

Over eighty percent of the students parents completed high school, while 20 % of both parents had earned a college degree. Approximately 15 % of both parents earned a graduate degree.

In reference to college residence during their first semester, approximately 39 % of the respondents stated that they planned to reside in the dormitories, while 56 % planned to reside with their parents or at a private residence. This coincides with the fact that the majority of students come from Nassau County and over 80 % are 11 - 50 miles of distance from home to college. The trend in the last three years, is for New College freshmen to reside in the dorms.

Educational and Career Objectives

For the majority of students (76 %), New College was their first choice in colleges to attend. The most frequently cited reasons for selecting New College were that the college offers special programs, has a good reputation, offered financial assistence and on advice from a guidance counselor. These reasons have remained consistent for the past four years for entering New College freshmen.

Over 92 % of the new students indicated that they not only plan to earn a B.A. degree, but to continue on to some higher degree such as the Ph.D. or LLB. The percentage of students planning on a law degree (17 %) is overwelmingly higher than national norms and may be due to the existence of the Hofstra Law School.

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the major areas of study anticipated by entering New College freshmen. The table also includes percentages for students entering other four year colleges and universities.

TABLE 1

Probable Major Fields of Study
(in precents)

FIELD OF STUDY	NEW COLLEGE	NATIONAL
Agriculture	0	4
Biological sciences	8	9
Business	6	16
Education	0	7
Engineering	0	12
English	0	1
Health professions	3	8
History, political science	20	4
Humanities (other)	3	2
Fine arts	0	6
Mathematics and statistics	3	1
Physical sciences	3	4
Social sciences	6	5
Other technical fields	8	6
Non-technical fields	31	11
Undecided	11	5

As can be seen from Table 2, "lawyer" is the single most popular career objective of these entering New College freshmen. Interest in the fields of education decreased over the past four years.

TABLE 2
PROBABLE CAREER OCCUPATIONS

CAREER	NEW COLLEGE	NATIONAL
Artist	3	8
Businessman	9	14
Education (college)	0	.4
M.D. or DDS.	15	9
Educator (secondary)	3	3
Educator (elementary)	0	3
Engineer	0	11
Health professions(non-MD,DDS.)	6	10
lawyer	24	7
Nurse	0	4
Research scientist	3	4
Other Occupation	18	15
Undecided	21	10

Whatever their specific choice of career, New College freshmen place greater emphasis on such things as working with people, contributing to society, working with ideas and less emphasis on rapid job advancement, and high earnings than do entering freshmen at other colleges and universities.

Values and Attitudes

Fifty-two percent of the 1976-77 New College freshmen indicated a political orientation of "far left" or "liberal". This general self analysis by the respondents is supported specifically by their responses to a number of items on the ACE questionnaire dealing with their opinions about social and political issues. Table 3 presents a breakdown of the student responses to such questions. A review of Table 3 suggests that the New College freshmen are in fact more "liberal" in their opinions about women's rights, legalization of marijuana, and attitudes toward the law and civil liberities than are other entering students at four-year colleges and universities.

TABLE 3

Percentage of Students Agreeing Strongly or Somewhat to Value Items

ITEM	NEW COLLEGE	NATIONAL
Gov't. not controlling pollution	95	83
Gov't. not protecting consumer	87	73
Gov't. should help private colleges	87	59
Gov't. should discourage energy use	81	81
Too many rights for criminals	41	58
Not obey laws against own views	28	30
People should be paid equally	11	20
Grading in high school too easy	62	62
Women's activities best confined to home	19	23
Live together before marriage	54	50
Discourage large families	64	60
Sex o.k. if people like each other	60	49
Women should get job equality	95	83
Wealthy should pay more taxes	78	75
Marijuana should be legalized	64	48
Busing o.k. to achieve racial balance	35	32
Can do little to change society	57	42
Prohibit homosexual relations	24	38
College regulate students off campus	6	11
Student appreciates college if pays more	46	51
Students should help evaluate faculty	87	76
Abolish college grades	14	18
De-emphasize organized sports	35	27
Colleges should regulate student publications	14	35
College has right to ban speakers	17	20
Adopt open admissions at public colleges	19	25
Use same degree standard for all	76	78
Students have right to ban speakers	57	60

Similarly, when students are asked about their life objectives (see Table 4) that they feel are very important, the New College freshmen express greater concern about influencing the political and social world around them, helping others, and being creative, and less concern about personal success as defined financially or succeeding in one's own business.

TABLE 4

Objectives Considered to be Essential or Very Important
(percentage response)

LIFE OBJECTIVE	NEW COLLEGE	NATIONAL
Achieve in a performing art	16	12
Be authority in my field	70	73
Obtain recognition from colleagues	51	64
Influence political structure	44	17
Influence social values	45	29
Raise a family	46	55
Have administrative responsibility	36	31
Be well off financially	40	67
Help others in difficulty	69	54
theoritical contribution to science	14	17
Write original works	24	14
Create artisitic works	27	14
Be successful in my own business	34	69
Be involved in environmental cleanup	29	16
Develop philosophy of life	60	66
Participate in community action	45	24
Keep up with political affairs	57	45

Self -Ratings of Traits

Included in the ACE questionnaire since 1974, is an item which asked students to rate themselves on a number of personal traits. Table 5 provides the responses to these traits in terms of percentage of students who rated themselves as above average on the specific trait.

TABLE 5

Trait Self-Ratings: Percent of Students Rating Themselves as Above Average

TRAIT	NEW COLLEGE	NATIONAL
Academic ability	76	72
Athletic ability	22	44
Artis tic ability	41	24
Cheerfulness	60	58
Defensiveness	19	26
Drive to achieve	76	71
Leadership ability	65	53
Mathematical ability	41	49
Mechanical ability	32	27
Originality	54	47
Physical attractiveness	30	33
Political conservatism	14	15
Political liberalism	41	25
Popularity	38	38
Popular with opposite sex	32	33
Public speaking ability	33	29
Self-confidence(intellectual)	57	54
Self-confidence (social)	41	41
Sensitivity to criticism	30	27
Stubborness	38	38
Understanding of others	97	70
Writing ability	49	42

The New College students rated themselves as above average in artistic and leadership ability, political liberalism, and in understanding of others.

OMNIBUS PERSONALITY INVENTORY RESULTS

Thirty-nine freshmen completed the OPI. A comparison of this year's entering students to 1975 entering freshmen appears in Table 6. For purposes of comparison of results for the two groups, multiple t tests with an alpha level of .05 were conducted.

TABLE 6

Means and Standard Deviations of OPI Results for New College Freshmen 1975 and 1976

OPI SCALE	1975 MEAN	1975 S.D.	1976 MEAN	1976 S.D.
Intellectual Disposition Category	4.3	1.36	6.0	1.87
Thinking Introversion	54.2	3.41	23.7	7.02
Theoretical Orientation	46.4	6.46	18.1	4.91
Estheticism	51.0	7.58	12.6	4.78
Complexity	51.7	2.03	16.0	5.01
Autonomy	57.9	4.89	25.9	6.84
Religious Orientation	51.0	4.71	15.2	4.20
Social Extroversion	43.6	6.79	22.9	6.78
Impulse Expression	46.3	9.07	32.9	7.80
Personal Integration	58.6	5.12	29.6	9.33
Anxiety Level	53.1	3.41	11.6	4.45
Altruism	52.2	6.81	42.9	5.32
Practical Outlook	44.6	2.76	14.5	4.88
Masculinity-Femininity	41.1	6.53	29.5	6.54
Response Bias	50.2	6.21	34.8	4.49
Number of students	48		39	

There are a number of differences between 1975 and 1976 entering freshmen. The 1976 students are less interested in intrinsic intellectual pursuits and also manifest lower levels of social and personal adjustment than the 1975 students.

The IDC (Intellectual Disposition Category) of the OPI is designed as a way of classifying students on a continuum of intellectual style. Individuals in categories 1, 2, and 3 exhibit relatively strong scholarly and intellectual orientations, with particular concern about the theoretical, philosophical, esthetic and complex nature of intellectual pursuits. Individuals in categories 6 and 7 tend to be more pragmatic, and less interested in the theoretical aspects of their edu cational activities. The majority of New College students this year fall into category 6. Heist and Yonge (1968) have described individuals in categories 5 and 6 as students who are motivated with strong goal orientations, but who express less concern about the intrinsic satisfactions gained from the acquisition of knowledge. Heist and Yonge contend that there is no correlation between the absence of intrinsic intellectual interests and academic achievement and, in fact, students who fall into categories 4,5, and 6 frequently function very well in a competitive intellectual atmosphere.

NEW COLLEGE WRITING TEST RESULTS

Thirty-one out of a possible 39 freshmen completed the New College Writing Test. It is interesting to note that approximately the same number of students passed as those who received a remedial grade.

PASSED = 15 REMEDIAL = 16 NO GRADE = 8

SUMMARY

While the New College entering class of 1976 is similar to other entering four-year university students in socioeconomic background, there are some differences between the two groups. The New College freshmen express career objectives that include additional education beyond the bachelor's degree, and preferences for careers which involve dealing with people and ideas. Also, the New College students are more "liberal" in their social and political values, and appear to be more educationally and academically self-confident than the average college freshman entering other universities.

REFERENCES

Heist, P. and Yonge, G. Omnibus Personality Inventory (Form F) Manual. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1968.